The Montgomery County 2008 Equestrian & Stable Survey

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Executive Summary – Kristin Fisher and David Tobin

Montgomery County has a rich agricultural history that is valued as a part of the County's culture. Over the past several decades, agriculture in this area has shifted from primarily large farms to smaller farms. At the same time, the equestrian community has become a greater presence in the County and one that significantly contributes to its economic base. In 2004, Montgomery County revised the zoning ordinance to include equestrian facilities within the definition of agriculture. Doing so made it easier for equestrian businesses to operate in Montgomery County.

Since 1998, the County has reached out to the equestrian community to help them understand how best to utilize local recourses available to them. The success of these efforts has been measurable, but the County's ability to successfully bridge the gap between County agencies and the growing equestrian community has been limited. One purpose of this survey was to learn how County resources can be used to forge a partnership between horse enthusiasts and County agencies. One goal of this partnership is to implement sound agricultural principles in business and conservation throughout the County.

This survey was sponsored by nine organizations, each with varied interests and goals for the survey. Collectively, these goals included a desire to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the equestrian community, understand their needs and desire for information, evaluate the use of conservation practices, better understand how to expand existing education and outreach programs, and gauge the level of interest in agricultural land preservation programs in the County. Information gathered as a result of the survey was to be used to guide policy evaluation, improve education programs, allocate resources, and better understand our equestrian partners' needs.

Survey results indicated that people enjoy riding for the following reasons: being outdoors, relaxation, exercise, being with horses, and spending time with friends and family. The survey confirmed that riding is a family sport that applies to all ages. Overall, pleasure trail riding was the most popular equestrian activity with dressage and eventing the preferred organized competitive activities. The challenge of fox chasing followed closely. These responses are consistent with the community's desires for public facilities that support the continued growth of this form of recreation and enterprise. Survey respondents overwhelmingly supported the idea of making indoor arenas, cross county courses, and outdoor arenas available for public use, as well as increasing trail accessibility. They also would support charging a small fee for the use of such facilities within the County.

Survey results provided a wealth of useful information that will support planning and evaluation of resource allocation. It also identified new areas where further consideration may be warranted. For example, while it was interesting to learn that stable or equine farm owners predominantly indicated that they use nutrient management and/or soil conservation plans, it was not clear if the benefits of using these types of practices are being realized. As the County continues to reach out to horse farms, large and small, it will be interesting to learn how the County may be of assistance in helping landowners achieve maximum benefits from the use of such plans.

It was also learned that the minority of farms own or board the majority of horses. This creates two groups of clients with different needs: the few large operations with many horses, and the many smaller operations each with a small number of horses. Therefore it is important for

County agencies to pursue programs specifically geared toward the needs of these two very different groups.

Horse farm owners indicated that they regularly mow their pastures, rotate the grazing of their horses, test the soil, routinely drag their fields, and often use temporary fencing for pasture management. The majority of horse farm owners temporarily store soiled bedding and pay to have it hauled away. While they support a County program to have manure picked up, they could not commit to paying a fee until they knew what that fee may be. This creates an opportunity for the County to investigate and potentially support a manure and soiled bedding recycling program.

The survey results confirm the assumption that there is a need for reaching out to the smaller home-based horse farm owner. Thirty -six percent of respondents indicated that they keep their horse at home, and these smaller horse farms appear to be increasing in popularity. For the next administration of the survey, it will be useful to target this demographic so that we can understand how to best include them in our partnership with the equestrian community.

In the mean time, the County will continue to reach out to horse farm owners and riders through continuing education efforts and building good will. The knowledge gained through the results of this survey will help the County tailor its programs and services to meet the diverse needs of this demographic. It also supports the suggestion that the County spend more time in the equestrian community we serve building relationships and sharing information with each other. The primary goal of building this partnership is to establish trustworthy communication between the partners, regular information exchanges that benefit all partners, and information sharing to achieve mutually beneficial goals. By doing so, government agencies and groups serving equestrians will be better informed and better able to serve this growing segment of the agricultural community.

How to Use the Data – Skip Camp, Ph.D.

The overall survey design was complicated by a number of factors.

- First, within the population resided two groups. Each group shared overlapping interests, yet also had distinct information.
- Second, the mode of administration was three fold, self-administered via hardcopy and the Web, as well as collection of data via telephone.
- Third, the survey was administered from October to December 2008. This period historically demonstrates low cooperation rates.
- Fourth, because of the two distinct groups within the population, two separate sampling strategies were used. For the horse farm and stable owners, a probability sample was used and for the horse riders, a non-probability sampling technique was used. This decision was based on the ability to construct a sampling frame. For riders, no list or sufficient credible sources existed to construct a frame that would include all known riders. Therefore, it was necessary to rely on non-probability sampling techniques to reach these hard to find members.
- Fifth, data gained using the non-probability sample, or from riders, can only be used for information purposes.
- Sixth, because of the random methods used, some home horse farms were included in the survey. Home horse farms are those who keep their horses at home. From the survey we learned that this segment is growing. We therefore, believe that with the next administration of the survey, this group should be included in the sampling strategy as a segment with proportional allocation in the final sample size.
- Finally, the number of survey sponsors involved in the project required keen coordination and flawless execution.

In spite of these hurdles and in large part due to the generous contributions by all team members, especially the equestrian community, the survey achieved a 53 percent response rate for licensed facilities and an overall response rate for stable and horse farms of 50 percent.

Several limitations impacted the overall performance of the survey. Despite posting survey invitation flyers at stables, horse farms, and at local equestrian establishments, the coverage rate for riders remained low. Ninety four riders responded to the survey with a mean age of 48 years old. At first glance, these data may imply the majority of riders are older. However, this was not the case. We also believe that if this survey were conducted during the summer months, the number of riders who participated would be higher and we would capture many more riders of a younger age. The efforts to reach riders in general and younger riders more specifically, was not as effective as it may have been during the summer when more patrons are visiting stables for lessons. During these times flyers can be handed out to patrons.

In addition, the data collection field was limited to approximately 2.5 months. If the survey is conducted during the summer, this field can be extended to allow more time to establish relationships with facilities and to distribute notices. Finally, with more time to prepare for the survey launch, local feed stores and equipment suppliers could be enlisted, thus extending coverage on the home horse farm. These types of coverage issues will continue to pose challenges in the future. One solution might be to gain cooperation from those organizations to which riders who responded indicated they belong, and therefore, to gain access to their mailing lists in order to send notices.

Finally, the survey instrument has previously not been tested as this was the first administration. In addition, although there was a pretest, it was limited to just two members from each group. Now that the survey has been administered, it is clear that the question asking for

household rider's ages did not work as well as it could have. In addition, the question that asked about the number of horses owned, leased, and boarded was designed to estimate total horses in the county. However, the categories may not have been as distinct as first believed. The questions that asked about a nutrient management and soil conservation plan also proved troublesome because it was not clear if these types of plans meet county standards.

For example, 76% indicated that they use a nutrient management plan; however, it was not clear from the survey question that we were asking if they used a plan that met county requirements. In other words, some respondents may have a plan that they use, but this plan does not meet county requirements. In addition, only 21% of those who indicated that they use a nutrient management plan also gave the reason for using this plan as required. On the other hand, 46% did not give a reason. These data may suggest that 'over reporting' may have occurred for this question. This phenomenon is not unusual particularly with "socially good" type questions. In other words, the use of a nutrient management plan appears as a socially good response for farm owners and therefore more may have indicated yes to this question than actually use such a plan, or one that meets county requirements.

Because this was the first administration, we are encouraged by the low number of question wording issues that were revealed. We also know that with the next administration, information learned will be used to enhance the design of some of the survey questions that were found problematic. In addition, information topics will be fine- tuned to focus in on details that might have been overlooked in the first administration. Finally, reporting for questions that allowed selection of multiple response categories are reported for all responses given, not for all respondents that responded, for example, organization that they may belong to. One respondent may belong to multiple organizations.

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Overview

The Montgomery County 2008 Equestrian & Stable Survey was a cooperative effort between the equestrian community and the following sponsors: Montgomery County Department of Economic Development; University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, Montgomery County; Montgomery Soil Conservation District; Equestrian Partners In Conservation; Montgomery Parks – M-NCPPC; MidAtlantic Farm Credit; and *CALLC* Research. The sponsors donated their time and resources to define the research, develop and distribute the instrument, and to collect, analyze and report the data. The equestrian community donated their time to complete the survey and share their valuable insight. This research would not have been possible without the valuable contribution made by the equestrian community and as a result of their efforts; we were able to learn from them their needs and desires, as well as how they feel about a number of policy issues. *CALLC* Research mentored the research design process, designed the instrument, conducted analysis, developed the final report, and monitored data collection. David Tobin, Montgomery Parks – M-NCPPC, managed data collection.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to explore unmet needs of the equestrian community and obtain data that may be used to support policy decisions, policy development, evaluate and allocate resources, and support planning efforts. Another purpose was to evaluate recent policy changes in land and soil management. Finally, it was used to better understand stable or horse farm owners and managers information needs.

Instrument Design

The design team consisted of Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, Montgomery Soil Conservation District, Montgomery Parks – M-NCPPC, and *CALLC* Research. The design team met on several occasions from 8 August to 23 August 2008. The purpose of these meetings was to define the research direction, define the research scope, refine topic areas, define data needs, and develop the draft analysis plan and final survey instrument.

CALLC developed the first draft of the survey instrument and then by using team input, each of the next 14 iterations. The instrument was designed to accommodate data collection from two groups, horse riders and stable or horse farm owners or managers. Primary topic areas for riders focused on exploring rider characteristics, understanding satisfaction with available resources, and to better understand their riding experiences within the county. Primary topic areas for stable or horse farm owners focused on leased and owned land topography, uses for manure recycling, nutrient management, and soil management. Both groups were asked what, if anything, the county could do to assist them.

The instrument consisted of thirty three main, or trunk questions and 48 follow-up questions. Trunk questions performed as screening questions to direct respondents to skip follow-up questions that did not pertain to their specific set of circumstances. Two major screening questions focused on directing rider or stable and horse farm owners to questions specific to their area of expertise. Using this design, respondent burden was minimized.

The instrument collected demographic information consistent with anonymous administration, e.g. age and zip code. The instrument also collected data on the number of leased, owned and boarded horses from each respondents. From stable or horse farm owners,

data was also collected regarding their interest in seminar topics and need for additional information on grant or trust programs. Those who responded affirmatively to these types of questions were asked for their permission to be contacted. Contact information for those respondents who indicated they wanted to be contacted was released to the County for follow-up purposes.

Population

The population was defined as the Montgomery County equestrian community. Residing within this community are two distinct groups, those that ride horses and those that service those who ride horses. Therefore, the target population was defined as Montgomery County horse riders and stable or horse farm owners. The actual population was defined as Montgomery County horse riders and stable or horse farm owners and their managers. For the balance of this document, stable or horse farm owners is used for stable or horse farm owners and their managers.

Sampling

Two sampling techniques were used to accommodate the diverse characteristics associated with each group within the defined population. For stable or horse farm owners, a probability sampling technique was used that required a census of all licensed and listed facilities to be included.

For equestrians, a non-probability snowball sampling technique was used. Snowball sampling was used to accommodate the lack of any known complete list of riders. The cost to build such a list using household screening techniques exceeded available resources for this project. However, it was learned that EPIC maintained a list of EPIC members' email addresses that was used to inform members of various information. Although EPIC agreed to forward the invitation to volunteer to participate in the survey, it was assumed that this list was not inclusive of all riders in the County. This assumption was realized as a result of the various organizations to which respondents reported belonging. Only 20% of those who selected one of the provided organizations belonged to EPIC. Therefore, this assumption was reasonable and snowball sampling was therefore a reasonable technique to attempt to reach as many riders within the county as possible.

Sample Size

The sample size for stable and horse farm owners was n=216, of which, 100 records were determined eligible.

For riders, we can only estimate the sample size to be n=280. The EPIC list included 265 records. From these 265 records, three were returned as not deliverable. Because the survey was conducted during November and December, we assume the number of riders attending stables and horse farms was low. In addition, the survey Web site did not experience a lag in data entry once the email notice was sent to EPIC members. In other words, once the notice was sent to EPIC members, data was entered on the survey Web Site. If the invitation was forwarded as requested, the site would have experienced additional spikes or continued attempts to enter data after the initial invitation was sent. This was not the case and therefore, we assume that not many survey invitations were forwarded on to other riders, or those riders chose not to participate. Based on this assumption, we estimate the snowball technique might have reached an additional three riders. By applying these assumptions, we estimate the sample size noted above.

Frame

Two frames were used. The stable or horse farm owners' frame was built by combining the list of licensed stables with the list generated from enhancement efforts. The list of licensed facilities contained 93 records and from enhancement efforts an additional 123 records were generated. The list of licensed facilities was supplemented by searches of published lists of stable or horse farms servicing Montgomery County, including any qualifying facilities listed in the Equiery magazine. In addition, a search of the Web revealed several sites that advertised the required services. Enhancement efforts added an additional 123 records. The frame was not de-duplicated prior to fielding the study to accommodate the fast start-up efforts. After the study was fielded, the frame was converted to a sample management list. The sample management list was de-duplicated using exact matches on name, street address, telephone number and a number of combinations of these criteria to identify exact matches, or duplicate records.

The horse rider frame was built by EPIC using their mailing list which contained 265 records. This frame was supplemented through the distribution of flyers at a local equestrian supply store, the Surry. The Surry is an established local firm that provides riding equipment and other services to the Montgomery County equestrian community. In addition, the cover letter sent with the survey to stable and horse farm owners included a request to post the survey invitation flyer for their patrons. Finally, the email sent to the EPIC mailing list contained a request that the invitation be forwarded to other riders they may know.

Pretest

The pretest was conducted over a two day period. Members of the population were contacted and asked to volunteer to assist with the pre-test. To volunteer, each potential respondent had to agree to complete the survey and to participate in a 20 minute debriefing. Two members from the riding community and two from the stable or farm owner community agreed to volunteer. *CALLC* conducted the pretest, analyzed the data and presented pretest results to the design team. As a result of the pretest, the instrument received minor adjustments to question wording to incorporate respondent suggestions. In addition, some minor wording adjustments were also made. The final instrument was submitted for printing approval on 11 October 2008. Approval was received 17 October 2008.

Survey Administration

The survey was administered using three methods. First stable or horse farm owners received a self-administered hardcopy to complete. This hardcopy of the survey instrument was accompanied by a cover letter and self-addressed stamped return envelope. Contained within the cover letter was a URL address that could be used in the event a stable or horse farm owner preferred to respond via the Web. Second, horse riders were only offered the Web to provide data. Lastly, stable or horse farm owners received reminder calls. During reminder calls, if the stable or horse farm owner indicated that they had not received the survey instrument, or in an attempt to convert a refusal, the survey was administered via telephone. All telephone data collection was conducted by *CALLC*.

Self-Administered Instrument

The approved self-administered survey instrument consisted of six pages of survey questions and a cover. The cover contained the sponsors' names and a graphic suitable for this population. On page one, instructions for completing the survey were included. In addition, the

survey instrument was accompanied by a cover letter that explained the purpose, asked for cooperation, and included the URL for entering data via the Web, if this was the respondent's preferred method. Finally, the hardcopy survey instrument was contained in a mailing packet that included a postage paid self-addressed return envelope.

Web Programming

The approved self-administered instrument was converted for programming in the Web survey application. Programming was completed by M-NCPPC using in-house ASP.Net 2.0. software. The programmed instrument mirrored the printed version in that survey questions and response categories were the same. In addition, survey instructions for navigating the Web application were included on the first Web page, or welcome and screening page. However, questions were arranged into five pages by grouping questions relevant to respondent type. The Web application experienced some system errors during the first week of administration. These errors precluded at least two respondents from providing survey data. Because the administration was anonymous, it could not be verified if these two respondents ever attempted reentry of their data.

The Web survey instrument was organized into six pages. The first page contained a welcome message, instructions, and also screened for relevant knowledge before access to the survey was granted. Each subsequent page contained survey questions from related topics. To accommodate survey logic, lead questions required a yes or no response that produced a toggle effect. Pending each response to logic driven questions, unrelated survey questions were hidden. Response options included yes/no selection, selection from drop down list, check box options for listed categories, and other specify text options. A catch all open-ended text question was included at the end of the survey that allowed respondents to include comments. Once data had been entered on each page, respondents were instructed to select a "continue" button which, when engaged, saved data for that page. One software operational issue was that once "continue" was selected, respondents could not return to the previous page to change their given and saved responses. Therefore, instructions included on the first, or screener page, directed respondents to include any changes they wanted in the comments section at the end of the survey. Five cases included requested changes to given responses. These changes were made during data cleaning.

Data Collection

Data collection was managed by David Tobin of Montgomery Parks – M-NCPPC. Data collection was opened on 29 October 2008 and closed on 15 December 2008. To distribute hard copies of the survey to stable or horse farm owners, Montgomery County Economic Development, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, Montgomery Soil Conservation District; and Montgomery Parks – M-NCPPC jointly worked to complete the printing, stuffing, labeling, and mailing phase. *CALLC* converted the frame into an electronic file and Montgomery County Economic Development prepared the mailing labels used to mail the surveys. Mailing occurred 29 October 2008. Included in each mailing package were a survey instrument, cover letter, flyer, and self-addressed postage paid return envelope. The cover letter disclosed the sponsors, explained how collected data would be used, asked for voluntary cooperation, and included contact information that could be used to ask questions.

The cover letter also asked for cooperation in distributing the enclosed flyer and contained a URL in the event providing data via the Web was preferred. The enclosed flyer was

directed to the riding community and contained, in addition to sponsor and contact information, a unique URL for riders to use to complete the survey. Stable and farm owners were asked, via the cover letter, to voluntarily post or distribute the flyer to any riders that they may have contact with. In the event additional copies of the flyer were needed, stable or horse farm owners were asked to contact *CALLC* for replacement copies. *CALLC* received two contacts; each requested an electronic copy of the flyer. These two requests were filled within 48 hours of receipt.

Starting on 4 November through 18 November 2008, the design team made follow-up calls. Follow-up calls were made to all farm and stable managers. The purpose of the follow-up call was to confirm receipt of the survey, respond to any questions and encourage cooperation. Each sampled farm or stable owner was called once. In the event no one answered the telephone, a message was left that contained the relevant information. However, farm and stable owners were also asked to call a number that was left in the event they did not receive the survey or if they had any questions. In addition, during the process of follow-up calls, two surveys were completed via telephone.

Completed received surveys were reviewed for completeness. Survey data from each survey returned by mail or taken via telephone was appended to the database using the Web platform. *CALLC* entered completed surveys received via telephone and Montgomery Parks M-NCPPC entered completed surveys received by mail. One exception to these procedures required that *CALLC* append the data from five surveys received by mail after 15 December 2008 directly to the data file.

Data Conversion

The Web platform consisted of three interfaces. One was used to collect data from owners of farms or stables as well as riders. One was used to collect data from only riders generated from flyers or the EPIC emailing list and the final one was used for data entry. Interfaces were identified by their unique URL address. Data from the three interfaces were combined, or stored, in a database using a notation to indicate from which interface the data was received from. The storage database was converted to produce a delimited flat ASCII file. The delimited flat ASCII storage file was then read into SPSS. Once the ASCII file was read into SPSS, it was clear that response categories for survey questions that allowed respondents to select more than one response were continuous string data. These types of response categories were parsed to create unique response categories and recoded to create question responses. To create the analysis file; data parameters were defined, survey question responses labeled, and alphanumeric string data converted to numeric by recoding.

Sample Distribution

Fielding the study was fast tracked. Therefore, de-duplicating the stable or horse farm list prior to fielding was limited to only exact name, address, and telephone number matched. However, after fielding the study a more intensive de-duplicating procedure was used. From the licensed facilities list, 2 duplicate records were identified and one had moved from the county. When the two lists, licensed and enhanced, that composed the stable or horse farm frame were compared, 67 duplicate records were identified. De-duplicating required that exact matches on facility name and address, or address and telephone number, or facility name, or telephone number be removed.

To resolve exact match telephone number or address records, *CALLC* called the facilities. In addition, during telephone follow-up, it was learned that a number of sampled facilities

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had stopped doing business in the county, stopped doing business in general, or only used the stable facility as a mailing address and were not really stable or horse farm owners or their managers. Table 1 below, demonstrates the probability sample distribution for owners of stables or horse farms.

Table 1: Probability sample distribution

Description	Subtotal	Total
Licensed facilities	93	
Duplicate records	2	
Moved from county	1	89
Enhanced sample	123	
Duplicate records	69	
Moved from county	4	
Not conducting business	18	
Not a farm or stable owner or manager	21	11
Eligible sample		100

Response Rate

For the licensed facilities, there were 93 records. Of these, two were duplicated and one had moved from the county, reducing eligible records to 89. If we assume all were eligible because they were licensed facilities, we calculate a straight response rate as completed surveys received from stable or horse farm owners divided by licensed facilitates, or 47/89= 53%. When reporting data for licensed stable or horse farm owners only, this response rate is appropriate.

For the enhanced sample, of the 123 additional records identified as possibly eligible, 67 were duplicate records, three had moved from the county, 21 were not stable or horse farm owners, and 18 were not conducting business. Therefore, 89% of enhanced records were ineligible. Of the 67 duplicate records, 32 records were duplicated on the licensed facility list. To account for the proportion of eligible records included in the enhanced sample for which eligibility is not known, we adjust the denominator by the proportion of ineligibles found in the enhanced sample. This adjustment is reasonable in light of the large number of messages left during telephone follow-up portion of the survey, or that proportion for which eligibility is not known. Applying these assumptions, the overall survey response rate for stable or horse farm owners is calculated using completed survey over the adjusted denominator, or 47/94=50%. When reporting data for all stable or horse farm owners, this response rate is appropriate.

For non-probability sample, or riders, it is not possible to calculate a response rate. However, 93 of the completed surveys were from riders.

Respondent Demographics

Due to the anonymous nature of this survey, personal demographic data about respondents was limited their zip code, age, number of years riding, and years of riding experience. In addition, several questions were used to define the demographic nature of stable or horse farm owners and riders. The following zip codes contained five or more responses.

Zip: All data:

Zip Code	Number of respondents	Percent of all responses
20854	16	12
20837	11	8
20874	11	8
20841	11	8

Zip: Stable owners

Zip Code	Number of respondents	Percent of all responses
20837	7	16
20841	7	16

Zip: Horse riders

Zip Code	Number of respondents	Percent of all responses
20854	14	15
20874	8	8.5
20878	7	7.5
20814	6	6.5

The age range for all respondents was 15 to 79 years old. Of these, 48% were less than 50 years old. The mean age was 49.82 with a standard deviation of 11.88. The mean age of stable owners was 53.40 with a standard deviation of 11.86 and for horse riders, it was 48.49 and 11.66. Stable owner's age ranged from 27 to 79 with 46% clustering between the ages of 50 and 58 years old. Horse rider's age ranged from 15 to 69 with 51% clustering between the ages of 43 and 55.

Ninety nine percent of all respondents indicated that they currently ride horses; 98% of stable or horse farm owners and 72% of horse riders are currently riding horses. The average number of year's stable or horse farm owners have been riding was 33 and for horse riders, it was 24. The average number of years involved with horses was 33.5 for stable owners and for horse riders, it was 23. For stable owners, the cluster effect was between 20 and 50 years of involvement with horses, representing 70% of those who responded. Only 17.5% of stable owners have less than 20 years experience. This marked difference may indicate the industry is aging without replacement, or that new facilities are not being added. This assumption is supported by field interviews in which it was learned that some stable owners are moving out of the county and they may not be replaced. To maintain a vibrant equestrian community in the

county, this issue may require further study to fully appreciate if the apparent decline is real and if so, to understand what is impacting it.

Sixty one percent of all respondents indicated that they take lessons, with 46% of stable owners and 71% of horse riders indicating that they take lessons. Sixty two percent of all respondents indicated they work with a trainer, with 54% of stable owners and 68% of horse riders working with a trainer. Fifteen percent indicated they take private lessons at their home, or on their own farm. The following licensed facilities service 50% of the lessons being taken.

- A BIT BETTER FARM, LLC
- BASCULE FARMS
- BROAD FIELD FARM
- CATCHING DREAMS STABLES
- DOC'S HAVEN FARM, LLC
- FOX HOLLOW FARM
- HARKAWAY FARM, LLC.
- INVERNESS FARM
- MILLHAVEN FARM

- OTASAGA FARM
- PLEASANT VIEW FARM
- POTOMAC HORSE CENTER, INC.
- REDDEMEADE EQUESTRIAN CENTER
- BARRIE SCHOOL
- WHEATON PARK STABLES, INC.
- WHISPERING WINDS STABLES, LLC
- WYNDHAM OAKS
- PLEASANT VIEW FARM

Nine percent of all respondents indicated that they lease a horse, with the distribution evenly distributed between stable owners and riders. Sixty one percent of all respondents indicated that they or someone in their family lease one horse, 15% lease two and 8% lease 3 horses. Sixty two percent of all respondents indicated they lease one horse for their personal use, 16% two and 8% three. Fifty percent of stable owners indicated that they lease one horse for their personal use and 25% lease two. While, 68% of riders lease one horse for their personal use, 11% lease two and 11% lease three. All respondents indicate that they lease from an individual. Thirty nine percent of all respondents indicated they offer one horse for lease, 8% five and 8% six horses for lease. Forty percent of stable owners indicated that they offer one horse for lease, 20% offer five, 20% offer six and 20% offer 10 horses for lease. Thirty eight percent of riders offer one horse for lease.

Horses Owned

All respondents were asked - How many horses do you own?

Number of horses	All	Stable	Rider
1	26	4	22
2	20	3	17
3	6	4	2
4	5	4	1
5	8	5	3
6	3	3	
7	1	1	
8	4	4	
9	2	2	
11	3	2	1
12	1	1	
13	1	1	
14	2	2	
20	2	2	
29	1	1	
30	1	1	
32	1	1	

The survey accounted for a total of 436 horses, of which 342, or 78% were owned by stable or horse farm owners and 94, or 12% were owned by riders. For riders, 85% owned two or less horses and for stable owners, 72% owned less than 10 horses. Less than 8% of stable owners who responded to the survey owned 20 or more horses.

Horses Boarded

Where do you keep your horse(s)?

Where they keep horses	Count	Valid Percent
Home	36	36
Boarding Stable	60	59
Friends/Relatives	4	4
Other	1	1
Total	101	100

The other category was used to note places that respondents kept their horse, other than at one of the listed categories, or if horses were kept at more than one location. Therefore,

responses noted in the other category are in addition to the response noted above and therefore, were not recoded.

Where do you keep your horse – other:

Keep Horses – other	Count
And at home	5
And friends	1
Own a stable	1
Own a riding stable	1
Own Facility	1
Retirement	1
Run a riding stable	1
Some at friends	1
Total	12

Thirty six percent of stable owners who responded to the survey indicated that they keep their horse at home, 59% at boarding stables, and 5% with friends or relatives. The distribution for the other category was evenly distributed across categories with the exception of home, which had five responses.

Household Riding Composition

Although a number indicated others within their household rode horses, they were reluctant to provide ages for these riders. Overall, 91% of respondents refused to provide ages of other riders in their household. This is understandable, specifically if these types of riders are young. In other words, the question may have been perceived as intrusive. Overall, 52% indicated that other within their household rode horses. Given the mean ages for both riders and stable or horse farm owners, this data is consistent with empty nesters, however this an assumption based on the data. These data may also indicate this sport is not being pursued by a younger population. If this assumption is correct, it may be of interest in learning why not. The following question was answered by all respondents.

Do others in your household ride horses?

Other riders in HH	Count	Valid Percent
No	53	52
Yes	49	48
Total	102	100

Sixty nine percent of stable owners and 35% of riders indicated that others within their households ride.

Equestrian Organizations

All respondents were asked what equestrian organizations they, or others in their household, belong to. Below are the responses given to the category response choices. Respondents could select more than one response. Choices provided in the other category, follow.

Equestrian organization

Equestrian organization	Count	Valid Percent
None	27	15
EPIC	32	18
TROT	24	13
Pony Club	10	6
Riding Club	11	6
Maryland Horse Assoc.	19	11
American Horse Assoc.	23	13
Other	32	18
Valid total	178	100

Equestrian organization – other

Description	Count
4-H	2
American Horse Association	
Maryland Arabian Horse Association,	
American Paint Horse Association	
Capitol Polo Club	
Commonwealth of Dressage & Combined Training Association	
Goshen Hunt Club	
Great and Small	
Inter-School Horse Show	
League of MD Horsemen	
Maryland Horse Breeders Association	
Maryland Horse Council	3
Montgomery County Soil Conservation	
MCTA	2
MGAA	
NARHA, AV	
Oldenburg NA, Welsh Pony/Cob Assoc	
Paso Fino Horse Assoc. Potomac Valley Dress.	
PBHT	2
Potomac Hunt Club	6
Potomac Bridle and Hiking Trail Association	3
*Continued on next page	

Equestrian organizations - other continued:

Potomac Valley Dressage Association	14
ADS, CAA	
Sugarloaf Polo cross	
Sugarloaf riding club	
United State Dressage Federation	8
United States Eventing Association	16
United States Equestrian Federation	11
United States Hunter Jumper Association	
USTR, CSM	
VHS	

Stable owners predominantly belong to the American Horse Association and the Maryland Horse Association. Riders predominantly belong to EPIC and the American Horse Association.

Stable	Count	Valid percent
EPIC	7	17
TROT	7	17
Pony Club	4	10
Riding Club	2	5
Maryland Horse Assoc.	9	21
American Horse Assoc.	13	30
Total	42	100

Riders	Count	Valid percent
EPIC	21	44
TROT	2	4
Pony Club	6	12
Riding Club	8	16
MD Horse Assoc.	2	4
American Horse Assoc.	10	20
Total	49	100

Riding Experience

What riders like most about the riding experience:

ALL	Count	Valid percent
Being outdoors	109	18
Relaxing	98	16
Being with horses	110	18
Physical activity	100	17
Feeling independent	44	7
Time with friends	65	11
Time with family	27	5
Therapy	51	8
Total	604	100

Stable	Count	Valid percent
Being outdoors	33	18
Relaxing	29	16
Being with horses	35	19
Physical activity	26	14
Feeling independent	12	6
Time with friends	19	10
Time with family	15	7
Therapy	19	10
Total	188	100

Riders	Count	Valid percent
Being outdoors	76	18
Relaxing	69	17
Being with horses	71	17
Physical activity	74	18
Feeling independent	32	8
Time with friends	46	10
Time with family	15	4
Therapy	33	8
Total	416	100

What riders listed in the other category:

- Learning, communicating, and training
- Sense of accomplishment (2)
- Complete life style
- It's my job (2)
- Thrill of the chase
- Learning experience, skills, about life (3)

Trails

Eighty six percent of all respondents indicated that they ride on trails with 84% of stable owners and 59% of riders indicating they ride on trails. Thirty percent of all respondents felt trail connectivity was sufficient, 45% felt trails were well maintained, and 49% would like to see more trail maps made available. For stable owners, 61% felt trail connectivity sufficient, 75% felt trails were well maintained and 42% found adequate trail map availability. For riders, 21% believe trail connectivity was adequate, 75% well maintained and 9% believe adequate maps were available.

When asked what type of trail was used to ride, respondents provided the following answers. While stable owners predominantly use both trails, they also more heavily rely on private trails than riders. Riders on the other hand rely more heavily on public trails than stable owners.

All	Count	Valid Percent
Public	22	25
Private	10	11
Both	51	58
Don't know	5	6
Total	88	100

Stable	Count	Valid Percent
Public	5	14
Private	5	14
Both	25	72
Don't know	0	0
Total	35	100

Riders	Count	Valid Percent
Public	17	32
Private	5	9
Both	26	50
Don't know	5	9
Total	53	100

Stable or horse farm owners were asked if their property provided access to trails and to describe the type of access. Seventy eight percent offer trail access and 62.5% offer access to both private and public trials. Twenty percent of owner's property offers no access to either public or private trails. The tables below contain the given responses to these two questions.

Trail access		
Stable	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Yes	32	78
No	9	22
Total	41	100

Access type		
Stable	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Private	9	28
Public	3	9
Both	20	63
Total	32	100

Fifty five comments were received in the other category under what improvements could be made to trails. Of these, 33% would like to see improved maintenance and clearing of trails and 24% would like to see more trails. Eighteen percent would like improved or additional signage and 16% would like to have more maps available. Below, additional other comments provided are presented.

- Better signage and map availability
- Marked more
- More of them
- Better mapping - connectivity
- Allow horses on the Greenway trail, improve signage
- I would love to see organized work groups to clear and help maintain trails
- Clearing, marking, jumps and options

- More trails and trail access (including trailer access), although trail maps are available online, they are not accessible from the trails
- Better clearing of storm damage
- More trails
- Only Hunt club trails are well maintained
- More and add jumps
- More access points
- More trails
- More trails that cut through throughout the county
- Trash cans in parking lots
- Wider and less rocks
- Let ATV's also use trails
- Trail markers like Rachel Carson
- Connection of Rachel Carson & Hawlings River (Rte 97 underpass for horses)
- Some trails have a lot of deadfalls
- More trails; maintained
- Signage
- Availability increased
- Connections/Blazes
- Trash cans

- A map from where our farm is to find out where we can ride.
- More signage
- More connectivity, more signs for directions. (NOT "no riding" signs.) Get rid of cyclists, or teach them better manners.
- More options
- Clear maps, permission to ride across trails clear, safe riding surfaces, well marked trails, clear places to park a trailer
- Chain saw fallen trees
- Completion of greenways; trailer parking lots; pedestrian lights at road crossings

* Continued on the following page

Trail improvement –other continued:

- Blocked trails from fallen trees attended to more quickly
- Clearing and in Muddy Branch some bridges
- More trails, more maps
- Open fields no marked trails
- More detailed trail maps ranking trails by ease, alerting of possible hazards, and offering more reference points so people understand where they are in relation to roads and other landmarks
- More Trails, Well kept, Jumps, Maps
- Clearing certain sections of the trail that have a ton of little rocks all over the place.
- Less building
- More connected trials, better maintenance and signage
- More coordinated volunteer efforts to clear trails that we use
- Better maintenance
- More maps and trail markings.
- Interconnectivity easements between existing trails; trail maintenance from county on county-owned property
- More trails
- More maps
- Better maintenance
- Easier access, better maintenance
- Clearer knowledge of trails/maps/parking options
- No improvement required
- More trails, better maintenance
- More trails all over Mon. Co.
- Better knowledge and access to trail groups for adults

Ride Activity

All respondents were asked to select all the activities in which they ride. Below are the predefined categories contained in the survey followed by responses found listed in the other category.

ALL	Count	Valid percent
None	4	1
Polo/Polo Cross	3	1
Fox chasing	33	10
Hunter	31	9
Jumper	32	10
Racing	2	0
Rodeo	1	0
Jousting	1	0
Vaulting	1	0
Driving	3	1
Dressage	56	17
Endurance	9	3
Eventing	29	9
Pleasure/Trail	90	27
Therapeutic	8	3
Show	28	9
Total	331	100

Rider	Count	Valid percent
None	2	1
Polo/Polo Cross	1	0
Fox chasing	19	10
Hunter	18	9
Jumper	18	9
Racing	2	1
Rodeo	1	0
Jousting	1	0
Vaulting	0	0
Driving	2	1
Dressage	35	17
Endurance	3	1
Eventing	16	9
Pleasure/Trail	57	29
Therapeutic	7	3
Show	20	10
Total	202	100

Stable	Count	Valid percent
None	2	1
Polo/Polo Cross	2	1
Fox chasing	14	11
Hunter	13	10
Jumper	14	11
Racing	0	0
Rodeo	0	0
Jousting	0	0
Vaulting	1	0
Driving	1	0
Dressage	21	17
Endurance	6	5
Eventing	13	11
Pleasure/Trail	33	27
Therapeutic	1	0
Show	8	6
Total	129	100

Ride in activity other category:

- Paso fino horse show
- Competition
- Basic training
- Tech lessons
- Game
- Balanced seat
- Team penning
- Racing

Public Riding Facilities

Respondents were asked what public riding facilities they would use, if available. Below are their responses followed by those given in the other category.

ALL	Count	Valid percent
Indoor arena	66	37
Outdoor arena	50	28
Cross country course	63	35
Total	179	100

Stable	Count	Valid percent
Indoor arena	22	39
Outdoor arena	12	21
Cross country course	23	40
Total	57	100

Rider	Count	Valid percent
Indoor arena	44	36
Outdoor arena	35	28
Cross country course	43	36
Total	122	100

Comments received in the other category included:

- Indoor arena, need to get on the ball and put up a large show facility

- More trails (2)

- I'm not interested in much more

- Places like Schooley Mill Park

- Well maintained trails in other locale

When asked if a small fee would change their minds, the following responses were given.

All	Count	Valid percent
Yes	15	17
No	75	83
Total	90	100

Stable	Count	Valid percent
Yes	8	24
No	25	75
Total	33	100

Rider	Count	Valid percent
Yes	7	12
No	50	88
Total	57	100

When asked what the County could do to improve the riding experience, 22% indicated they want no improvements and 20% wanted to see more trails, trial connectivity, cleaner trails, better maintained trails and more trail maps. Below are the other received comments.

- A bigger indoor ring, lights for the outdoor ring, a cross country course
- A riding area like Schooley Mill would be great
- Add jumps to trails
- Add to and keep public trails useable
- Anything pro safety
- Better clarity for hunting, non-hunting areas
- Bring down the cost of lessons and have more stables give lessons on the centers horses!!
- Build a facility for riding and showing
- Build a local facility
- Build an indoor public access ring in lower MoCo
- Clean up at parking lots
- Clear and reserve areas for trail riding
- Complete Woodstock
- Continue to invest in horse facilities, show facilities
- Don't take away trails
- Educate drivers and non horse people
- Encourage horses as part of the community
- Expand trails and equestrian venues like the park on Rt. 28
- Finish Woodstock Equestrian Park
- Have a facility like Schooley Mill
- Have facilities available for public
- Improve facilities available at Woodstock Equestrian Park: build indoor and outdoor rings and maintain trails
- Improve use of old trails or access on private property and along roadsides
- Keep green space areas open for trails and other horse activities
- Keep open spaces/farmland
- Keep the Ag Reserve intact
- Educate bicyclists about horses.
- Less Deer Hunting
- Limit hunters with rifles to a short hunting season. Maintain hunting free Sundays
- Limit hunting
- Maintain open spaces and trail system
- Maintain the current open space and require riding easements for all new developments in rural Montgomery Co.
- Make the trails user friendly for horses - keep ATV and dirt bikes off the trails
- Available parking
- More horse friendly parks
- More info about trail rides
- More parking lots for trailers, pedestrian lights at road crossings
- More facilities
- Not pave existing trails
- Offer more options
- Offer more public riding facilities, especially a ridding facility
- Open more trails to horses in Rachel Carson Park

*Continued comments from County Improvement desires.

- Protect land from development
- Provide excellent, well run riding facilities
- Provide more facilities, especially cross country courses
- Provide more trail riding groups more often
- Safe road crossings
- Seriously consider us part of the Ag field to help us with the tax burden
- Slow down the hunting
- Support the efforts made by my riding facility
- The county trails that I ride on are wonderful and well marked.
- Trail markers in public parks
- Where can I find maps of public trails?

Outdoor Activities

Respondents were asked what outdoor activities other than riding they or members of their household enjoy.

All	Count	Valid percent
None	2	1
Baseball	6	3
Soccer	10	5
Basketball	5	2
Hiking	55	27
Tennis	22	10
Jogging	33	15
Fishing	20	10
Swimming	28	13
Biking	16	8
Softball	3	1
Golf	5	2
Hunting	7	3
Biking	1	0
Walking	1	0
Total	214	100

Outdoor activity tables continued broken down by riders and stable or horse farm owners:

Stable	Count	Valid percent
None	1	1
Baseball	3	3
Soccer	4	5
Basketball	2	2
Hiking	19	25
Tennis	9	11
Jogging	11	13
Fishing	6	8
Swimming	16	21
Biking	3	3
Softball	1	1
Golf	1	1
Hunting	4	5
Biking	1	1
Walking	0	0
Total	81	100

Rider	Count	Valid percent
None	1	1
Baseball	3	3
Soccer	6	6
Basketball	3	3
Hiking	36	27
Tennis	13	10
Jogging	22	17
Fishing	14	12
Swimming	12	10
Biking	13	11
Softball	2	2
Golf	4	4
Hunting	3	3
Biking	0	0
Walking	1	1
Total	133	100

Stables and Farms

Some respondents selected more than one response for the screening question used to establish stable farm eligibility. This condition is not uncommon as a stable owner may also perform as its manager. Therefore, given responses were recoded by allocating response categories with more than one position evenly across distinct manager or owner categories. Below are the results of the screen question.

All	Count	Valid Percent
Farm owner	23	53
Farm manager	3	7
Stable owner	12	28
Stable manager	5	12
Total	43	100

The types of facilities represented in the survey included the following:

All	Count	Valid percent
Riding center	14	37
Therapeutic center	2	5
Working farm	13	34
Neither	9	24
Total	38	100

An optional category was not used and therefore, those respondents who did not feel their facility was represented were not able to record a description. This would account for the variance between number of respondents and facilities reported. In the future, this type of category should be added to this question.

Horses Owned, Boarded, and for Riding

Only stable and farm owners and their managers were asked the following question. The following represents the number of horses respondents indicated that they own on their property.

Stable Owned			
Number of horses	Count	Number of horses by category	Valid percent
0	3	0	0
1	2	2	1
2	3	6	2
3	3	9	2
4	5	20	5
5	5	25	6
6	1	6	2
7	1	7	2
8	4	32	9
9	1	9	2
10	1	10	3
11	1	11	3
12	2	24	6
13	2	26	7
14	1	14	4
15	1	15	4
14	1	14	4
20	3	60	16
26	1	26	6
29	1	29	8
30	1	30	8
Total	43	375	100

Only stable and farm owners and their managers were asked the following question. The following represents the number of horses respondents indicated that they board on their property.

| Stable-Boarded | | | |
Number of horses	Count	Number of horses by category	Valid percent
0	14	0	0
1	3	3	1
2	1	2	0
3	1	3	1
5	1	5	1
6	1	6	1
7	2	14	3
8	1	8	2
9	2	18	4
10	1	10	2
12	3	36	6
14	1	14	3
15	2	30	6
16	1	16	3
20	1	20	4
23	1	23	4
26	1	26	4
40	1	40	8
50	1	50	10
55	1	55	11
60	1	60	12
70	1	70	14
Total	42	509	100

Only stable and farm owners and their managers were asked the following questions. The following represents the number of horses that respondents indicated are used for riding on their property.

Stable-Ridden Number of horses	Count	Number of horses by category	Valid percent
0	5	0	0
2	3	6	1
3	4	12	2
4	3	12	2
6	2	12	2
7	1	7	1
8	1	8	1
10	2	20	3
11	1	11	2
12	2	24	4
14	2	28	4
15	2	30	5
16	2	32	5
19	1	19	3
20	2	40	6
23	1	23	4
30	2	60	10
40	1	40	4
50	1	50	8
60	1	60	10
75	1	75	11
80	1	80	12
Total	41	649	100

Twenty five percent of stable or farm owners and managers indicated that they usually do not rest their pastures while 47.5% rest them more than once a week. Ten percent rest their pastures one day or less and 12.5% rest them two to seven days. Only one respondent indicated that they do not keep their horses in pastures.

Stable or Farm Economic Profile

Ninety one percent of stable or farm owners indicated that they have no plan to stop using their property for horses. Below are a number of other questions related to stable or farm owner's intentions, experiences, and use of their property.

When asked if this farm was their primary source of income, 19% indicated it was and 81% indicated it was not. When asked if in the last year the farm or stable was profitable, 22.5% indicated that it was and 77.5% indicated that it was not. These statistics adjusted slightly to 25% indicating the farm or stable was profitable in the past three years while 75% indicating that it was not. However slight this change may appear, the survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2008 in which significant economic change was also experienced. Given the decline in the number of new entrants and low profitability, these statistics may under represent the actual change if the survey was administered again in third quarter 2009. This assumption is based on cycling through a second summer season influenced by the current economic changes and the perceived seasonal effect for this industry.

Land and Topography

Stable or farm owners who responded to the survey represent 3,665 owned acres. When the two largest categories of owned land (999 & 406 acres) are included, 18% of responding stables operate on 50 or fewer acres and 31% for 100 acres or less. However, when the two largest categories of owned land are excluded, 29% of stables operate on 50 or less owned acres and 51% on 100 or fewer owned acres' accounts. Finally, with the two largest land categories excluded, 10% of stable or farm owners maintain economic industry on 25 acres or less. The table below demonstrates owned land distribution across stables and horse farms.

Stable-owned land			
Acres	**Count**	**Total acres**	**Valid percent**
0	2	0	0
3	1	3	0
7	1	7	0
8	1	8	0
10	2	20	0
14	1	14	0
15	1	15	0
18	1	18	0
20	3	60	2
25	1	25	0
32	2	64	2
35	2	70	2
40	1	40	1
41	1	41	1
42	1	42	1

Acres	Count	Total acres	Valid percent
45	2	90	2
50	3	150	4
56	1	56	2
78	1	78	2
80	1	80	2
86	1	86	2
94	1	94	2
100	1	100	3
119	1	119	3
120	1	120	3
200	2	400	12
210	1	210	6
250	1	250	8
406	1	406	12
999	1	999	28
Total	40	3665	100

No stable or horse farm indicated that they lease more than 45 acres .Of the seven who indicated that they lease land, 50% indicated that they lease 35 or fewer acres. The table below represents the various categories of leased land by stable or farm owners.

Stable – leased acres	Count	Leased acres	Valid percent
5	2	10	6
14	1	14	8
25	1	25	15
35	1	35	21
40	1	40	24
45	1	45	26
Total	7	169	100

Stable or horse farm owners were also asked about the number of acres used for turnout, see table below. The lowest number of acres reported for this purpose was two and the highest was 200. Forty percent of those who responded to the survey use 50 acres or less for turnout. The turnout acre per horse ratio was 1.2 with the low at .24 and the high at 5.7 acres per horse, however, 60% exceeded the 1:1 ratio for horses to acre.

Stable-Turnout acres	Count	Turn-out acres	Valid percent
2	1	2	0
5	6	30	2
6	3	18	1
7	1	7	0
10	1	10	0
12	4	48	3
13	1	13	1
14	1	14	1
15	1	15	1
16	1	16	1
18	1	18	1
20	2	40	3
22	1	22	1
24	1	24	1
25	1	25	1
28	1	28	2
30	1	30	2
35	1	35	2
40	1	40	2
50	3	150	12
60	1	60	5
65	1	65	5
95	1	95	7
115	1	115	8
150	1	150	11
200	2	400	27
Total		1470	100

Stable or horse farm owners were asked to describe their property's topography and gradation. They were also instructed to include owned and leased acres in their responses. The following tables represent given responses. The question above each table is the survey question to which they responded.

Does your property, including leased land, offer access to natural sources of water for your horses or farm animals?

Stable-natural water	Count	Valid percent
Yes	14	35
No	26	65
Total	40	100

Is this water source a:

Stable-water source	Count	Valid percent
Spring	1	8
Stream	3	23
Pond	9	69
Total	13	100

Does your property have any: CK

Stable-topography	Count	Valid percent
Gullies	7	22
Steep hills	12	38
Bare dirt pastures	13	40
Total	32	100

Land Management

Stable or horse farm owners were asked to check all the pasture management practices that they usually use. Regular mowing (21%), rotational mowing (16%), and soil testing (15%) were the response categories that received the highest number of responses. The table below demonstrates response category distribution. This table is followed by responses given to the "other" category, or responses that were not listed for selection.

Stable		
Pasture management	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Temporary electric fencing	18	11
Soil testing	25	15
Routine dragging	22	13
Manure removal	8	5
Regular mowing	36	21
Rotational mowing	27	15
Annual fertilization	15	9
Chemical weed control	16	9
Temporary sediment control fencing	3	2
Total	170	100

Stable
Pasture management - other
- Liming
- Composting
- Parasite control, sacrifice paddock
- Spread Manure
- Manure spreading
- Seeding

Stable and horse farm owners were also asked if they use a soil conservation plan, 69% indicated that they did. They were then asked to describe why or why not. Thirsty one percent also indicated that they did not use a soil conservation plan, they were then also asked why or why not. When asked if they use a nutrient management plan; 76% indicated that they did use one and 24% indicated they did not. The tables below demonstrate the valid percents for both of these two questions. Following the first set of tables on this page, are the reasons.

Soil conservation		
Stable	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Yes	27	69
No	12	31
Total	39	100

Nutrient management		
Stable	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Yes	29	76
No	9	24
Total	38	100

Stable

Soil management plan - reason they do or do not use one

- Not necessary
- Environmentally ethical
- Makes sense
- Expense
- Part of nutrient mgt plan
- The property is flat
- Best way to maintain property
- Mandatory
- Not an official plan
- Few animals
- Required by law
- Will next year
- I'm not sure what the actual "plan" is. I believe my field management practice conserve soil.
- Property includes an area of wetlands
- Don't know what it is
- State law - but it was designed for chickens and we should not have to use one
- Required
- Not yet implemented one because of cost
- Great help
- Required and good for soil
- Not enough horses to warrant

Stable

Nutrient management plan - reason they do or do not use the plan

- Not necessary
- Same
- Makes no sense - we soil test and fertilize based on test
- Not necessary
- Expense
- Required by law
- Required
- Time
- Best way to maintain property
- Working on a draft
- Few animals
- Required by law
- Remove manure via dumpster and hauled away
- Same as above
- We are required to have a nutrient management plan
- State law
- Required
- Not yet implemented one because of cost
- Easy to use
- Required and good for land
- Not enough horses to warrant

Stable or horse farm owners were asked who they would contact for information on a nutrient management plan and the following responses were given:

- Eddie Franchesci (5)
- Soil conservation (8)
- Agricultural Dept.

- Amanda Laudweig (4)
- Extension Services (4)
- Southern States

- Don't know (7)
- Web

Soiled Bedding and Manure

This question sought to understand how soiled bedding or manure was used. Stable or horse farm owners where given several options that included; horses live outside, sell, give away, recycle and haul it away. Four of the five options were followed with additional questions about how the category was used. The fifth category, horses live outside, no disposal necessary; did not have any follow-up questions. Thirty percent of stable or horse farm owners indicated that their horses live outside and therefore disposal was not necessary. Thirty one percent indicated that they pay to haul their soiled bedding or manure away and 91% of these owners pay for this service. Of those who indicated that they recycle their soiled bedding or manure, more than one option for spreading was selected in most cases. However, the two popular spreading places were on grazed land (40%) and non-grazed land (36%). These top two choices account for 76% of the spreading options. The tables below contain stable and horse farm owners' responses to this set of survey questions.

Stable		
Disposal of soiled bedding type	Count	Valid percent
Horses live outside, no disposal	11	25
Give away	6	14
Recycle	16	36
Haul	11	25
Total	44	100

Stable		
Hauling method	Count	Valid percent
Pay to haul	10	91
Haul for free	1	9
Total	11	100

Stable		
Recycle method	Count	Valid percent
Compost	16	94
Pile	1	6
Spread	0	0
Total	17	100

Stable		
Spreading place	Count	Valid percent
Grazed pastures	10	40
Non-grazed pastures	9	36
Crop fields	3	12
Fallow grounds	3	12
Total	25	100

Stable and horse farm owners were also asked if they would participate in a free manure recycling program if offered, 85% indicated yes, or maybe. When asked if a small fee were charged for this program, 76% indicated yes or maybe and 83% would prefer the manure to be picked up. The tables below represent stable and farm owners' responses to each question.

Stable		
Free manure pick-up program	Count	Valid percent
Yes	20	61
Maybe	8	24
No	5	15
Total	33	100

Stable		
Would use if picked up – or – you transport	Count	Valid percent
Picked up	26	84
Both	4	13
Neither	1	3
Total	31	100

Stable		
If small fee were charged for this program, would you still use it	Count	Valid percent
Yes	9	28
Maybe	16	48
No	8	24
Total	33	100

When asked why they would or would not use the program, the following responses were given; however, 30% of those who provided a reason indicated it would depend of the cost of the program. This issue would require additional study on the program cost and price point.

- As long as it is less than the 187.50 I pay every two weeks
- As long as the fee is lower than what I am currently paying to haul it away.
- Big help
- Compost needed for our nursery
- Composting works for me with 4 horses
- Depends on if other options were practical (selling, giving away or recycling)
- Depends on ease of use
- Don't need it, use all we have
- Good for the environment
- Horse pastured
- I can spread it
- No need to collect and dispose
- Not hard to recycle here
- Depends on cost (7 responses in this category)

Stable and horse farm owners were also asked what they thought were the benefits of farm soil conservation practices. The two most prominent choices were less soil erosion and fewer wet lands. These two responses accounted for 83% of given response; however, less soil erosion was the category with the highest number of responses. Below are stable and horse farm owners' responses to this question.

Stable		
Benefits from a soil conservation plan	Count	Valid percent
Fewer wet lands	11	16
Improved water quality	25	37
Less soil erosion	31	46
None	1	1
Total	68	100

Stable and horse farm owners were asked what conservation practices that they currently had installed on their property. Animal waste composting was the most prevalent practice (25%) followed by stream fencing and roof run off, both receiving 10% of responses. Watering troughs was the category that received the lowest number of responses (5%). The table below represents stable and farm owners' responses to each category. The following table includes plan activities for next year.

Stable		
Active conservation practices	Count	Valid percent
Pasture rotation	12	8
Stream fencing	10	7
Stream crossing	14	9
Watering troughs	7	5
Animal waste composting	38	25
Animal waste storage	12	8
Pasture renovation	12	8
Heavy use areas	11	7
Erosion control	11	7
Tree planting	9	6
Roof run off	14	10
Total	150	100

Stable
Plan to implement in the next year
- Roof run off
- All listed categories (2 responses to this category)
- Double fencing
- New barn
- Rotate pastures
- Composting
- Stream Fencing, Roof run off, erosion control
- Pasture renovation

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Seminars

Stable and horse farm owners were asked about seminars, if they would attend and the preferred format. The seminars being asked about were offered as free and related to farm management. Respondents clearly had a preference for the weekend (58%), in the evening (60%), using a small group setting as a pasture walk or in the classroom lasting no more than three hours. The tables below provide their responses to these types of questions about seminars.

Stable Attendance day	Count	Valid percent
Sunday	4	21
Monday	1	5
Tuesday	3	16
Wednesday	2	10
Thursday	1	5
Friday	1	5
Saturday	7	38
Total	19	100

Stable Seminar setting	Count	Valid percent
Classroom	10	15
Small group	16	25
On-line	8	12
News letter	10	15
Magazine articles	3	5
Brochure	2	3
All formats work well	2	3
Pasture walks	14	22
Total	65	100

Stable Time of the day	Count	Valid percent
Morning	7	28
Afternoon	3	12
Evening	15	60
Total	25	100

Stable Length of seminar	Count	Valid percent
1/4 Day	6	22
1/2 day	8	30
2 to 3 hours	13	48
Total	27	100

Pasture management was requested by 43% of responding stable or horse farm owners. The following responses were also provided as interest topic areas for free seminars.

- Weed control, erosion control, proper grading, pest mgmt.
- How to determine when the field needs treatment.
- Farm management, managing animal health
- Weed control and identification, hay growing
- Managing on a very tight budget
- Erosion control, pasture management, manure management
- Grass/weed identification, weed control, best practices, pest management
- Manage as-cycline
- What to do about ground hogs.
- Water runoff and hay growing
- Diseases, horse health
- Grasses, invasive weeds, remediation of over seeded area

Assistance Programs

Stable and horse farm owners were asked what type of assistance programs would best meet their needs. A number of options were offered and respondents were given the opportunity to write in a non-listed category. Respondents indicated they are most interested in grant programs (32%) and programs that assist with used bedding recycling (28%). The desire for assistance with used bedding recycling programs is consistent with respondents' desire for a recycling program that picked up used bedding even if a small fee were charged. The table below indicates respondents' desires for assistance programs. This table is followed by responses given to the "other" category.

Stable		
Assistance programs	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Grants	14	28
Used bedding recycling	3	6
Interpreting regulations	3	6
Business planning	5	10
Business forecasting	3	6
Marketing	4	8
Loans	16	32
Advertising	2	4
Total	50	100

Stable
Assistance programs - other
- Hay and shavings co-op buying for small farm
- Less regulation
- Water conservation. ag product on small farm

Stable or horse farm owners were also asked what preservation programs they might like to know more about. The table below contains given responses. This table is followed by the categories from which respondents were given to select from.

Stable		
Preservation programs information needs	**Count**	**Valid percent**
Legacy Open Space Program (LOC)	4	14
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	2	8
Montgomery County Rural Legacy Program (RLP)	5	19
Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program (AEP)	4	16
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)	3	12
Montgomery County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	2	8
All listed programs	6	23
Total	26	100

With the exception of all listed programs (23%), the Montgomery County Rural Legacy Program was of most interest (19%); closely followed by the Legacy Open Space and the Montgomery County Agricultural Easement programs. Both received 15% of the selected responses.

Respondent Comments

Below are the comments received from survey respondents. Please Note: Comments provided below are verbatim and have not been edited; only minor spelling corrections have been made.

Data corrections noted within comments have been made to the analysis file.

Case ID	Comment
18	Thanks to the Montgomery County Park and Planning Commission for preserving and managing park land. It is an asset to our communities, and benefits quality of life for ALL county residents (not just horse riders).
25	The Epic trails near my house are wonderful and the extension recently done Partnership Road were very nicely done. Thanks for all your work.
33	Who is best to contact re pasture, hay field, and space management ?
34	I have had 18 years on a horse. Recently I did some damage to my shoulder so right now I can not ride. About 4 years ago I went out looking for a stable that would give general lessons. What I found was that you needed to own or lease a horse from most of the places I checked out. I have a disability but can ride just fine in regular classes however I can not bridal or put a saddle on a horse with one hand. I am hoping that once Woodstock gets up and running and once I'm better I will be able to ride there. I enjoy doing drill work engaging me and my partner syncing up together. It's not that easy to do and I just love it!!
34	Is there anyway to lower the cost of lessons? I don't earn a lot and lessons cost a lot.
38	There was a problem I encountered after filling out page 2, I clicked the Proceed button and it took me to an Error page (tried it 3 different times, always the same result). I bypassed that by not filling out page 2 and clicking the Proceed button, filling out page 3 and then hit the Back button to take me to page 2. Filled that out and hit the Forward button to continue on.
38	Then I think on page 4 there was a question about giving away compost to someone besides a mushroom farm or something - the field was inaccessible so I couldn't specify who we give it to. (We give some of our compost to a CSA down the street - Red Wiggler Farm, they come pick it up.)
39	Please continue to set aside, preserve, & protect Montgomery County's precious & unique open & equestrian spaces. Do NOT allow Montgomery County to go the terrible & shameful way of Fairfax & Loudoun Counties, Virginia with the unbridled destruction of farm lands, open spaces, & parks through rapacious development. Please I beg of you.

40	Thank you for doing this work. I introduce many people to horse who have never had any contact with them before. The experience is wonderfully enriching for them. I talked recently with someone who remembered with great pleasure that I took them on a trail ride six years ago. It was their only trail ride. We need these open spaces and access to horses not only for us horse people, but so that others can have these enriching experiences added to their lives.
42	EPIC logo seems to be spreading---that's great. Keep the Ag Reserve intact!
45	I used to own a horse and boarded at Merry-Go-Round and then at Hunt View. Riding on trails was real nice, but they were less connected than expected.
47	Please look at the example of Schooly Mill Park as a model for Woodstock Park. Multi use facilities that are well managed are valued by the community.
47	Bring the horse community together.
56	The horse culture of the Montgomery County is an important element of the life style. Where can one find maps of the public trails?
63	I fully support Montgomery County's effort to enrich more people's lives by providing opportunities with horses.
65	Keep up the great work! We appreciate the support you are showing for horse owners. We are also very enthusiastic about the county's plans for Woodstock Equestrian Park.
70	I would strongly support a program to pick up manure for recycling. Would be able to convince people at my barn to participate. Would be willing to volunteer to organize manure recycling program.
78	We have a boarding facility and are expanding into training and lessons. We therefore have more horses on the property and need to figure out how to control the bare areas, add some pasture management as well as manure management, all within our budget. However, our budget is tight, as we are also in the process of upgrading our facilities, ie buildings, rings, so any grants or other types of financial assistance to put some of these management practices in place would be very helpful.
81	I have been reluctant to go on trail rides because of unpredictability (terrain/deers, foxes, etc). More information on trail rides would be very useful and welcome. Montgomery County is very beautiful, and I enjoy riding there.

92	I support continued development and increased density in existing urban type areas in order to preserve the open space. efforts to support/increase public transportation between urban areas decreases traffic and allows for better flow to rural areas. I do not need to be contacted, however, as an urban planner and landscape architect. if i can be of assistance please feel free to contact me.
115	Feel the county should do what it takes to keep boarding places in the county, I like having my horses close by … Saves gas as well. brings money into the county
117	I do not own my own or lease a horse (due to money issues) and that makes it hard on me to find a school that has horses to ride. I also get board in an arena going around and around in circles. I'm looking for an instructor who will do everything with me, being in the arena, jumping, going out on a hack, doing drill work etc... When I was a little girl we would do everything and I miss that.
117	I also feel that if I have to groom, saddle and bridal a school horse that the school should not be asking so much money in lessons.
117	I used to ride and I hope to again sometime in the future. I have an injury and because of it I had to stop riding but once I get the injury under control I will be back on a horse.
120	Trees are the main business of the farm … Horses are just a hobby.
124	I used to ride and I hope to again sometime in the future. I have an injury and because of it I had to stop riding but once I get the injury under control I will be back on a horse.
140	Question B.2. - I have been riding 6 years; then there was a gap in years; then I rode 11 years.
140	Question D.3. - Information on nutrient management planning, who would you contact first? Cooperative extension service except that Doug Tregoning tells people its OK to spread fresh manure, which is incorrect.
142	I'm really concerned about the potential for starving/abused horses this winter - between the economic issues, high fuel (hay) prices, and elimination of slaughter for horses. Can a "hot line" be developed for persons to report issues, and/or even a "drop" location were persons could leave horses they could no longer care for (similar to how county animal shelters work for dogs/cats)?

146	I have just enclosed another 11 acres into pasture - this was a hay field - but I found an abundance of people looking for boarding since several local barns have closed due to increase in field ... expenses. The fence and building have been up 5 weeks and already I have 7 new boarders. I feel the horse industry is big in Montgomery County.
147	Thank you for asking how to help us ... I hope this will be helpful ... Also, the cost of doing business has significantly gone up while customers have decreased ... keeping the management plan for chicken farmers will help us reduce this burden and manage the change a little better.
148	Respondent indicated they wanted to be contacted but did not provide address.
154	I travel from Carroll County to Montgomery County for the superior training, facilities and atmosphere. Please continue to support this industry.
154	Thanks!

Miscellaneous Facilities Servicing the Equestrian Community

Below is a list of the facilities that may, or may not, be servicing the equestrian community. These names may also be AKA for other facilities. There is no way of knowing if they are related to any one facility, sole proprietor operating under an umbrella, or have some other relationship to established facilities in Montgomery County.

- Avenel Barn
- Callithea Farm
- Canterbury farm
- Centurion Farm
- First Choice Farm
- Hunter's Horizon
- Old 99 Farm
- Pleasant Prospect Farm
- Taylor Farm